

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A floor care appliance, comprising:
 - a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon;
 - at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the cleaning operation;
 - a microprocessor maintaining at least one operational parameter used to control [[for controlling]] said at least one electrically powered device, said microprocessor configured to collect and store performance data associated with said electrically powered device; and
 - a port electronically connected to said microprocessor for selectively connecting said floor care appliance [[directly]] to a personal computer through a digital pathway, said personal computer configured to modify said at least one operational parameter based on said collected performance data.
2. (Currently amended) The floor care appliance of claim 1, wherein said digital pathway utilizes a protocol that is a member of the group consisting of RS-232, Universal Serial Bus, ethernet, Firewire, Blue Tooth, X10, infrared, and ~~RS-485~~ RS-485.
3. (Currently amended) The floor care appliance of claim 1, wherein said personal computer is connected to a remote computer, said remote computer configured to update said microprocessor with new operational parameters based on said collected performance data.
4. (Original) The floor care appliance of claim 3, wherein said personal computer is connected to said remote computer via a member of the group consisting of a modem and computer network.
5. (Original) The floor care appliance of claim 3, wherein said microprocessor is pre-

programmed with an address for connecting to said remote computer.

6. (Currently amended) A floor care appliance, comprising:

a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon;

at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the cleaning operation;

a microprocessor maintaining at least one operational parameter used to control [[for controlling]] said at least one electrically powered device, said microprocessor configured to collect performance data associated with said electrically powered device; and

a port electronically connected to said microprocessor for selectively connecting said floor care appliance [[directly]] to a personal computer through a wireless connection, said personal computer configured to modify said at least one operational parameter based on said stored performance data.

7. (Currently amended) The floor care appliance of claim 1, wherein said performance data is collected in real-time ~~wireless connection uses a wireless radio frequency~~.

8. (Currently amended) The floor care appliance of claim 6, wherein said personal computer is connected to a remote computer, said remote computer configured to update said microprocessor with new operational parameters based on said stored performance data.

9. (Original) The floor care appliance of claim 8, wherein said personal computer is connected to said remote computer via a member of the group consisting of a modem and computer network.

10. (Original) The floor care appliance of claim 8, wherein said microprocessor is pre-programmed with an address for connecting to said remote computer.

11. (Currently amended) A vacuum cleaner, comprising:

a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon;

at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the

cleaning operation;

a microprocessor maintaining at least one operational parameters used to control ~~[[for controlling]]~~ said at least one electrically powered device, said microprocessor configured to collect performance data associated with said electrically powered device; and

a modem connected to said microprocessor for selectively connecting said vacuum ~~[[cleaning]]~~ cleaner to a remote computer via a modem over a telephone network, said remote computer configured to update said microprocessor with new operational parameters based on said collected performance data.

12. (Currently amended) The vacuum cleaner of claim 11, further comprising:

a switch for initiating the connection of said modem to said telephone network for connecting said vacuum cleaner to said remote computer ~~and the exchange of data between said microprocessor and said remote computer~~.

13. (Currently amended) The vacuum cleaner of claim ~~10~~ 11, wherein said microprocessor is pre-programmed with a telephone number of a remote computer connected to said telephone network.

14. (Currently amended) A method of connecting a floor care appliance having a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon and at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the cleaning operation to a personal computer, comprised of the steps of:

providing a floor care appliance with a microprocessor for controlling said at least one electrically powered device in accordance with at least one operational parameter;

collecting and storing performance data based on the operation of said floor care appliance;

selectively connecting said microprocessor ~~[[directly]]~~ to a personal computer through a digital pathway; and

~~exchanging data between said microprocessor and said personal computer~~
modifying said at least one operational parameter based on said performance data collected at said collecting step.

15. (Original) The method of connecting a floor care appliance to a personal computer of claim 14, further comprised of the steps of:

providing a switch on said floor care appliance; and
pushing said switch to initiate the connection of said microprocessor to said personal computer through said digital pathway.

16. (Currently amended) A method of connecting a floor care appliance having a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon and at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the cleaning operation to a remote computer, comprised of the steps of:

providing the floor care appliance with a microprocessor for controlling said at least one electrically powered device in accordance with at least one operational parameter;

collecting performance data based on the operation of said floor care appliance at said microprocessor;

connecting said microprocessor ~~[[directly]]~~ to a personal computer through a digital pathway;

exchanging data between said microprocessor and said personal computer;

connecting said personal computer to a remote computer; ~~[[and]]~~

analyzing said collected performance data at said remote computer;

~~exchanging data between said personal computer and said remote computer[[.]]; and~~

updating said microprocessor with new operational parameters based on said analyzing step.

17. (Original) The method of connecting a floor care appliance to a remote computer of claim 16, further comprised of the steps of:

providing a switch on said floor care appliance; and

pushing said switch to initiate the connection of said microprocessor to said personal computer through said digital pathway.

18. (Currently amended) The method of connecting a floor care appliance to a remote computer of claim 16, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the step of connecting said personal computer to a remote computer includes establishing the connection with a member of the group consisting of a modem and a computer network.

19. (Currently amended) The method of connecting a ~~vacuum cleaner~~ floor care appliance to a remote computer of claim 18, further comprised of the step of pre-programming said microprocessor with an address for connecting to said remote computer.

20. (Currently amended) A method of connecting a vacuum cleaner having a base portion for contacting a floor surface and performing a cleaning operation thereon and at least one electrically powered device producing work related to the cleaning operation to a remote computer, comprised of the steps of:

providing a vacuum cleaner with a microprocessor, said microprocessor maintaining at least one operational parameter used to control [[for controlling]] said at least one electrically powered device;

collecting performance data based on the operation of said electrically powered device;

providing a modem connected to said microprocessor;

connecting said modem to a telephone network;

connecting said telephone network to a remote computer; [[and]]

analyzing said performance data obtained at said collecting step;

updating said microprocessor with new operational parameters based on said analyzing step; and

exchanging data between said microprocessor and said remote computer.

21. (Original) The method of connecting a vacuum cleaner to a remote computer of claim 20, further comprised of the steps of:

providing a switch on said vacuum cleaner; and

pushing said switch to initiate the connection of said modem to said telephone network to connect said microprocessor to said remote computer.

22. (Original) The method of connecting a vacuum cleaner to a remote computer of claim 21, further comprised of the step of pre-programming said microprocessor with a telephone number of said remote computer.